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THE CITY

And Other Poems



By ELINOR CHIPP



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THE CITY
AND OTHER POEMS

By Elinor Chipp

DOUBTING CASTLE

[BONI & LIVERIGHT]

THE CITY

And Other Poems

BY

ELINOR CHIPP



BOSTON

THE FOUR SEAS COMPANY

1923

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NOTE

Certain of these poems have appeared in *The Poetry Journal*, *The Colonnade*, *Ainslee's*, *Smith's*, etc.

From
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THE CITY
AND OTHER POEMS

THE CITY

I have come back to you, my city,
Stretch out your wide arms and take me to your-
self,
Hold me fast in your most strong embrace
Dispassionate.

Inscrutable you lie;
Far to the right and left
Your wide streets run;
Streets that are full of life and love and youth!
Streets that are black with death and foul disease!
Streets that reflect your harlotry and woe!
Streets full of May and happiness and spring!
O fickle city!
Wherefore do you wind
Strong tendrils round my solitary heart?
I heard your voice afar; it called me still
With the strange lures that I had sought to flee.
City of laughing days and cloudless nights
How can you smile and laugh and dance?
How can you sing light-heartedly?
Your streets are full of memories for me;
By night I walk along the river's edge
Where many a night of old we two have walked
In long dead springs forgotten . . .
And over the parapet we leaned and heard the call
Of treacherous waters singing of their prey.
And bridges stood like rows of blazing stars,
And over us, and over us, the soft night wind . . .
Alas! to-night
Some other lovers walk along our path,
Or stop to gaze upon the hurrying tide
That speaks to them as once it spoke to us,
And lures with sudden sound of sobbing breath.

Then I go back and climb my creaking stairs,
And stand alone beneath the blazing stars,
High on the roof I overlook the city;
It stretches, dim, intangible and vast.
Lost in infinite softness all its squalor,
With rows of lights in never ending vistas.
And there is audible to me here
The throbbing heart of the city;
And the vast cry of humanity
Rises like the insistent wail
Of violins.
And I cry out in my anguish:
“O city roofs, how many aching hearts do you
cover?
O city roofs, is there any one sadder than I?”

Yet city, city,
In your streets
I, too, have known love's laughter!
I, too, have felt upon my lips
The passionate kiss of youth!
I have seen you flush
With the great desire of spring,
And in your parks
The little lovers sit
So quietly.
(The little plaintive lovers!)

By day I walk along the crowded wharfs
Where long ago
The Spanish sailors came
And brave ships left with all their sails unfurled.
Here I have seen the bows across the street,
And many an ancient figure-head
Curiously carved,
With that strange look of mystery which comes
From long and close communion with the sea.

I watch the people as they hurry by;
They pass me day by day with restless step,
The harlot with the hungry, searching eyes;
The laborer with his swinging dinner pail
And strong dreams in his eyes of home and babes;
The little flower girl who smiles at me;
The weary shop-girl and the dream-wrapt boy;
The beggar and the artist and the fop.
There is a hurry and a swing to life
Here in your streets!
The motors shriek, the tram-cars rock and roll;
An ambulance goes clanging down the street,
And people turn in curious surprise,
And then forget so soon—so piteously soon!
As you forget,
O fathomless city!
While your strange, mysterious voice goes on,
Infinitely unwearied,
And you gather us all to your breast,
Gigantic mother of men!
Obediently
I have come back to you;
Back to drown my griefs in your large heart.
For I am lonely, sad, and very tired.
City, city, hide not your soul from me!

NOVEMBER

Before me lies the dull forsaken square
Where hops one poor belated sparrow yet;
Silence around; a light in yonder house
Gleams on the pavement slippery and wet.

A little gust of melancholy rain
Stirs for a space the withered trees to speech.
A line of yellow light still shows afar
The sunset where the grey clouds cannot reach.

An ominous hint of winter in the air,
The mists will soon be up along the way;
The thin light fails before the sombre clouds
To mark the closing of a dreary day.

All down the street the huddled houses stare;
The dripping of the rain begins anew . . .
What is there, dear, in this, to bring me back
A night of radiance . . . and love . . . and you?

BEFORE DAWN

Last night you stirred in your sleep as the night
went through
And I knew you were thinking far off, invisible
things,
And my heart cried out with the ache of its love
for you
Till I longed to be free of its spell and the pain
that it brings.

There came to me, out of the night, the hum of
the city street,
The honking of horns and the rattle of passing
cars,
And ever the sound of restless and hurrying feet;
But my heart was alone and crying under the
stars.

My heart was alone, though you that I love the
best
Crept into my arms, and your slumber grew
peaceful again;
You smiled in your sleep, and your head drooped
over my breast,
But I lay awake; and my heart was heavy with
pain.

LAUS VENERIS

Your eyes that watch me with a pensive smile,
Your little hand between them and the light—
What is it makes you seem so strange to-night?
Why are we thus so silent for a while?
Here in the sultry, sullen London night
We sit together in the quiet room;
Your cigarette glows in the deepening gloom,
Our glasses all untouched beside the light.
The city's panting breath we scarcely feel,
Faint over the roofs the sunset's afterglow,
An organ jangling in the street below,
The shrill laugh of a child. Are these real?

We are two ghosts who sit here, side by side—
Two listless ghosts who have fallen short of life!
Could you have loved, if one had called you wife
Long years ago, as loves some blushing bride? . . .
Oh! sweet, pale ghost with old time passion spent,
What thoughts are yours behind those question-
ing eyes?
You are so young and yet so tragically wise,
O wilful, wild, and most impenitent!

Child of the city and mysterious night,
Most strange, untaught, desirous and desired,
Elusive as a dream, young, yet so tired
Of all earth's mockeries . . . On those bright
Sweet painted lips, and on that virginal face
The world has set with ruthless hands its seal!
What memories of forgotten lovers steal
Across your thoughts? . . . I would that I could
trace
Down through the years your little erring feet!
Who was it, child, in what forgotten spring
First taught you that most sweet, intolerable thing
Or learned through you that sin could be so
sweet . . . ?

Have you forgot? . . . do you remember yet?
Or did you come on earth all-knowing, wise,
With all earth's secrets in your laughing eyes
That are as blue as spring-time violet?
In vain I seek to look into your soul;
Baffled, I turn to hush a voice that rings,
"What is the end of these forbidden things"
It cries within my heart . . . "What is the toll?"

Strange grow your eyes and tragical they seem,
You shiver and turn sharply from my sight . . .
A moment, and your laughter stabs the night;
You touch my arm to brush away the dream.

Ah, child, grave wisdom speaks to you aright!
Why should we vex our souls with fruitless quest
After vain sophistries, who are so blest
To love thus passionately a single night! . . .
Your eyes are full of memories of love,
Your hands are heaped with roses of red shame,
And in the mouths of men you bear a name
The world has been forever scornful of!
But yet your throat is all a little mesh
Of silver veins that my lips burn to kiss!
What doubt is worth unravelling for this? . . .
And oh! the white transience of your flesh!

AUTUMN

When the low winds of scarlet autumn are
sighing,
Whispering, love, the days are over and sped,
Vanished the glad young laughter; the joys are
fled;
Far to the south the last frail swallow is flying.

Sweet, in the autumn time when the asters are
blowing
Purple and red and gold by the sun-wrapped wall,
How should we part ere the sere leaves flutter and
fall,
How should we part in the heart of the summer's
going?

We cling so closely and kiss so sadly each other,
While the earth sleeps, a honied, popped sleep,
The dreams of youth in her bosom are buried deep
Forgotten, the earth has forgotten the summer
her lover!

She will throb no more with the fresh young pulse
of noon,
She goes the old, sad way of the seasons' dying,
It wrings a sob from your heart so sadly crying . . .
*"What has the autumn done with the glad wild days
of June?"*

Up over the curve of the world, through the
golden haze,
There comes a voice in the wind . . . it is calling . . .
calling,
We shall hear it still when the winter rains are
falling,
When we walk no longer together down the
autumnal ways.

AZRAEL

“Mother, why is your hand so cold
And why do you bend your head?”
*(I am waiting the touch of an angel, child,
That hovers above your bed.)*

“Mother, what makes the light so dim?
Is the morning long away?”
*(He will carry you far to a lovely land
Before the dawn of day.)*

“Mother, how can I go alone?
Will the way be dark and drear?
*(The road is lit with the glory of God;
My child, there is naught to fear.)*

“Will there be toys in that far off land,
And children to play with me?”
*(There will be One who himself was a child
By the waters of Gallilee.)*

“And are they happy there, Mother?
Do they play from morn to even?”
*(Their little feet are swift, child,
In the playing-fields of Heaven.)*

“Is there any one there to take your place
With stories of fairy and elf?”
*(A mother will rock you to sleep to-night,
The Mother of God herself.)*

“Mother, I know the way is sad,
For tears are in your eyes.”
*(There is grief on earth, but joy in heaven,
Under the wide blue skies.)*

“Mother, Mother, the way is dark,
And the night so strange and wild!
How can I live without your touch?”
(And what of me, my child?)

TO ONE IN EXILE

To-day I walked with heavy heart
Beneath the cherry tree,
Where once you climbed to pluck the fruit,
And tossed it down to me.

Along the desert's burning rim
Will tropic breezes blow
The news that it is cherry time?—
I wonder if you know.

FOR H. W. J.

TO ONE WHO FELL

When the news came that you had gone away,
"Gone West"—they said, into that silent land,
With laughing eyes and courage in your heart,
Giving your life for glad adventure's sake;
I said: "It is not true, oh! not in him
Could Death so cruelly slay the joy of Life!"
I cannot think of you as gone indeed.
I still must fancy on some summer's day
I shall look up and see you standing there,
Wearing your dear, keen smile, and calling me
Down the long roads our autumn footsteps knew.
Then through the streets where we were wont
to tread
You shall swing lithely, with your old quick gait
As if those days had never passed . . .
Oh, not for you the endless sleep of peace!
You were too full of fire and of youth.
You cannot lie inert . . . unheeding . . . cold!
I think you still must hunger for the strife
And thrill of battle, when there ring about
Clamour of shell and scream of shrapnel shot!
Can you lie quietly and never stir
When echoes of the distant combat sound?
Shall there not come to you in the dark nights,
Lighting the sky, the star-shells' fitful glow
To call you back into the world of men?
Too cruel it were if you might never wake!
Oh, in some dim-guessed land, not meant for us,
When Death has stayed the lilting pulse of Life,
Does God keep still new worlds for conquering
For gallant souls adventurous as you?

IN WAR TIME

Bindweed and snapdragon
Flaunting in the sun,
Wide-eyed ladysmocks
Where the wood paths run,
Feather wands of loosestrife
A line across the lea,
Bend to watch the little stream
Winding to the sea.

*(Can he lie so very still, he who used to dance?
He who singing went from me down white roads of
France!)*

Harvest of yellow wheat
In shining rows,
Hedge of blackthorn glistening
Where the old road goes;
Wild geese honking overhead
All the idle day,
The steady humming of the bees
Marks the time away.

*(He was very brave and young, tall and strong was he!
Is there never word of him comes across the sea?)*

Flutter of wagtails
Flying to their nest,
Chirping call of blackbirds
Settling down to rest;
Poppies nodding drowsy heads
On the purple downs,
Little children going to sleep
In the quiet towns.

*(Mary Mother, will he come when the night is still?
Heartbreak, heartbreak, heartbreak, sigh the poppies
on the hill.)*

RETURN

Here stand I who once was young,
And at life a challenge flung:
"Give me of your wine to drink;—
I am thirsty at life's brink!"
One held up to my lips a cup
And bade me drink its sweetness up.
I drank . . . the world rocked 'neath my feet;
I drank and found it bitter-sweet! . . .
It took my years, my singing years,
And shook my sleep with restless tears;
It took my joy, it took my youth,
And broke my heart with bitter truth.
Little heart that once could sing
With joy for such a simple thing!
Little heart so strangely stirred,
When he spoke a kindly word!
Ah! foolish heart, that hoped to hold
A lover's words like drops of gold.
Oft I watched the moon at night,
Smiling from her dizzy height.
Over the hills where Youth went singing
I had dreamed Love would come winging;
Now I knew the dream was dead,
All its lovely radiance shed.
Not for me the dancing feet,
And not for me the laughter sweet!
I hid my heart lest he should know
That a dream could hurt me so.

Came a day for all my pride,
When Love would not be denied,
And a dark night when befell
Heartbreak keen and terrible—
The way that other feet had trod
I went out to find my God.
I came back with sorrow beat,
Broken hands and bruised feet;

Christ was a white thing on a cross
That smirked at me and mocked my loss;
Only the little buds that swell
Stood between my soul and Hell;
Only the wet, warm winds of May
Came to soothe my heart that day!

Days slipped by to years at last,
Like a dream the seasons passed;
The dark days when courage sank,
The empty days, drear and blank!
I shut my door on the bitter years,
I hid my face and covered my ears;
But I heard the solemn, awful tread,
The marching of the living dead,
And many a shout of cruel laughter—
With the sob that follows after . . .

Now all that is left behind,
I am free as sun and wind;
I have come to the old place
Where I met Love face to face.
In the closely curtained room,
Here I fought him in the gloom!
Nevermore my heart shall know
That old grief of long ago.
Now no more can sorrow spread
Long grey shadows on my bed!
I am very wise and sane,
Who no more can suffer pain;
I, indeed, am sane and wise
Now that time has sealed my eyes.
Should I mind me of old years,
Who have done with grief and tears?
I come back with living sated;
I have wept and loved and hated;
I have danced and I have sung,
And from life a pleasure wrung.
Now the old grief seems to be

Only a dim memory,
The love that had such fearful cost
Scarcely worth a thought at most.
Wise, my heart, to have forgot
An old grief that profits not!
Why then is there in my ears
A voice that whispers down the years,
As I walk the well-known street—
"If we meet . . . oh! if we meet . . . !"

AT LAST

If the man I once loved
Came to me, and said:
"You at last I really love,"
Would I bow my head?

Would I turn and answer
"You have come too late!
Love that's stifled over-long
Turns in time to hate."

Would I bid him leave me
With a laughing word?
Wound him with a bitter jest,
Send him off unheard?

Nay, but I would whisper
As I met his kiss:
"Dearest, I have waited
All my life for this!"

ALL SOULS' NIGHT

On All Souls' night I turned to pray.
I looked from the window where far away
The churchyard lay, with its quiet dead,
Their graves in the shade of the cypress spread.
The gibbous moon was wan and white,
And it glimmered with an eerie light . . .
Soon, I thought, from their beds of mould
The ghosts will walk in the shivering cold.

Now the night darkens, and soon they must come,
Those souls that have long been stilled and dumb.
The wind has arisen and roars apace,
Driving the clouds in a headlong race;
Now the white-faced moon, like a man afraid,
Cowers and hides in their sombre shade;
Cowers and hides his timid head,
Dreading the passing of the Dead.

They come from their graves with a silent tread,
They creep in the shadows, those poor, cold dead;
They raise their eyes that are sightless and dull
To my window here; and in the lull
The wind wails by with a dismal sigh.
They cannot speak, and they give no cry;
But their sobbing lips I well can see,
And they wring their hands in an agony.

Then they pass again to the churchyard tomb,
And I turn once more to my empty room;
The dead ashes lie on the cold hearth-stone,
And the dead hopes dwell in my heart alone . . .
Am I more living, indeed, than these
Who passed to-night on the icy breeze?
Crying mutely from dark till light
"Ora pro nobis!" . . . on All Souls' night.

NOW THE CHERRY BLOOMS ARE WHITE . . .

Now the cherry blooms are white
In the land I used to know,
Now the hawthorn in the hedge
Lies along the lanes like snow.

The lads I loved will walk to-day
Through fields my feet have known;
I tread the city pavements
Unfriended and alone.

O purple speedwell in the meads!
O gold upon the hill!
You would not spare your wealth of bloom
Though I lay cold and still!

Along the crowded city streets
I go a lonesome way,
Yet you will smile as blithely
When I am only clay!

TO-DAY

To-day the streets were fresh with spring,
The parks were all abloom with May;
It was like a day we spent together
In an older city, far away.

A city whose walls have seen brave sights
Of storied gallants, grave and gay,
And Queens whose footsteps we have walked in
Once in this month of laughing May.

To-day it seemed the same birds sang,
The same children rolled their hoops in glee;
Only the light of your smile was gone,
And I knew you so far from me!

O lips and eyes I have wanted most!
O longing hopeless and vain!
What is the sunshine or all the spring
Since it brings you not back again!

ON CORNWALL'S COAST

One summer day we stood entranced
On Cornwall's rocky coast,
And dreaming in the sunset saw
King Arthur's vanished host.

We saw Tintagel rising fair,
With many a lordly tower,
Where Iseult leant, with heart of fear,
To watch the storm clouds lower.

We thought of Gorlois, stern and bold;
Of Uther and Igraine,
And all the Lords of Camelot
Who formed their glorious train.

We whispered low of Guenevere,
Of Galahad's brave quest;
And Launcelot whose armour bore
The azure lion crest.

Another year—and you are gone,
How strange that this should be
When still King Arthur's castle stands
Beside the Cornish sea!

Still comes the sea birds' wailing cry,
Like white ghosts in the foam.
Ah, me! that in that voice I heard
A word to call me home!

ASHOKAN, 1913

Now when the waters creep into the land,
I mind me how we two aforetime stood
High on its banks, and watched the great dam
 grow;
Beholding man, in mockery of the Gods,
Turn land to sea, and all the countryside
Contorted by his mighty iron will.
There where the great black cranes swung to and
 fro,
Midst all the busy hum of vast emprise,
Shouting and thundering and the engines' scream,
We saw the little men that crawled like ants
Up the steep banks, and down into the pit;
An army battling with a prostrate foe.
So near we were and yet so far, its roar
Came to us dulled, like a great human cry;
While we stood watching as some Pharaoh might
In Egypt, when the pyramids arose.

FOR GERALD FITZGERALD

WILD GEESE

I heard the wild geese flying
 In the dead of the night,
With beat of wings and crying
I heard the wild geese flying,
And dreams in my heart sighing
 Followed their northward flight.
I heard the wild geese flying
 In the dead of the night.

SONG

Far off across the ocean,
Far off across the sea,
There stands a laddie singing
Who does not think of me.

He sees the blue sea shining,
He sees the level sands;
He does not see a maiden
Who stands with outstretched hands.

He does not see the green trees
That guard our cottage way;
He only sees the curlews,
And white ships on the bay!

IF ONLY YOU ARE KIND

I shall not ask for anything,
I shall not even sigh
For one sweet daring dream I had
Of gay youth passing by.

I shall quench my flaming heart
Of all its fierce-fanned fire;
There shall not stay to vex you
One faint perverse desire.

Oh! I shall grow as calm and still,
And restful as the wind,
That croons a little lullaby—
If only you are kind!

DOUBT

What can I give my dear,
Who has given his heart to me,
That I may keep his love
Safe under lock and key?

Oh, I can give him a singing voice,
And a body white and fine;
But what if he asked for an old, old dream
That once in the past was mine?

What if he came to seek for love,
Where never love might win?
What if he knocked at my empty heart
And said, "Sweet, let me in!"

GREY GULLS FLYING

Grey gulls flying to the north
On your wide spread wings,
Tell me how can I forget
Love that hurts and stings?

Is there any refuge far
'Neath your keen eyes' ken?
Can I find surcease from grief
By cave, or rock, or fen?

Is there anywhere a spot
Hidden far away
Where thought of him will never come,
Neither night nor day?

SEA WIND

White dunes under the moon,
And a wild bird's crying,
Stretches of sand and a windy waste
Ere the night's dying.

Memories thronging thick,
Ghosts of a blue September,
And a sea wind calling night and day:
"Remember, ah! remember!"

SEA SONG

The sea is singing a wistful song,
Full of a nameless pain;
The great, grey waters rise and fall
Again to the same refrain.

Grey as the deep the sea gulls wheel,
Crying their fitful cry
Above the dunes where the shadows lean
Purple and ivory.

Up on the beach the lean waves crawl,
Amethyst, rose, and grey;
They say to me over and over again:
"She is gone, she is gone away!"

SEA DREAMS

I felt it as I sat alone,
Beside the summer sea,
If I could go straight out, straight out,
My peace would come to me.

If I could find a path to where
The great ships singing go,
I think my heart would be at rest,
And beat serene and slow.

For I have thought that in the deep,
Far hidden out of sight,
I'd find again the one I love
And rest with her to-night!

LOSS

Last night the apple blooms were mist
Across the moon's pale amber flame;
The spring was at its loveliest—
And yet you never came.

To-day a wind from out the north
Has torn the petals all apart;
And strangely still, like little ghosts,
The hopes lie scattered in my heart!

MY HEART

We walk together in the streets,
And watch the dying of the year;
My heart cries to him all the while—
He does not hear.

He says the leaves are turning fast,
And that the fall is really come;
My heart cries: "See, I love you, dear!"
My lips are dumb.

He speaks of careless, idle things,
I gaily laugh and talk no less.
My heart! my heart! what would I do
If he should guess?

SONG AFTER SORROW

Oh! how can the spring come back, come back?
Oh! how can the robins nest?
And how can the earth put on her bloom
To turn the knife in my breast?

The swallows wheel in a sunset sky,
And the tasseled larch is green;
And through the moss of Thorley's woods
The violets slip between.

I will walk no more 'neath the budding trees,
When the winds of springtime blow;
And I'll climb no more to Lone-Tree-Hill
Where the pale anemones grow.

I did not guess that a day would come
When the spring would call to me,
And I should listen and turn my head
And weep on, silently.

I WILL GIVE YOU ALL MY LAUGHTER . . .

I will give you all my laughter,
I will give you all my joy,
You shall morning, noon, and night-time
Find my love without alloy.

I will give you mirth and singing,
I will hide my tears away,
That no man may discover them
Before the Judgment Day.

I will mend my heart so neatly
You shall not know at all
Its faith is made of broken dreams
A careless hand let fall!

THREE KISSES

I gave my lover kisses three,
Three kisses on his mouth,
They were to him like summer rain
After long months of drouth.

But one was for the man I loved
When springtime buds were gay;
And one was for the loving lad
I teased and sent away.

The last came from my hurt pride,
That left my spirit broken,
For all the singing joy I missed
From one lad's lips unspoken.

Between the midnight and the dawn
I kissed my lover thrice;
My lips to him were warm as love—
My heart, my heart was ice!

DROWSY AFTERNOON

Here in the drowsy afternoon
The bees hum in the close grown shade,
Here where the mind of man is made
Aware of life that passes soon.

Along the downs, across the wold,
With fire of passion, heat of love,
Beneath the blazing vault above,
The leaves of summer burn to gold.

Upon the hill, above the fret
Of earthly things, serene and high
The fir trees gaunt against the sky
Stand out in silhouette.

WHITE LILACS

The perfume of white lilacs
Stole through the open door;
And I was 'ware of other days,
And dreams lost long before.

I thought of you whose little hands
Once held my soul in thrall;
Pale, tender, little hands that now
Could thrill me not at all.

The perfume of white lilacs,
Of spring and violets,—
Strange, how the sense remembers still
When the heart forgets!

SMOKE

The smoke drifts high above the roofs,
Across the night's great seven stars;
It shrouds them in a glowing mist,
And backward streams in frail cymars.

Another night is drifting by—
Will you not heed, nor turn to me
Till we are one with empty smoke,
Or lost in time's immensity?

LOVE CALLED TO ME . . .

Love called to me one bright Spring day,
But I was very hard at play.
I said: "I have not time for love,
I will not know the sweets thereof."
The bright tears in his grave eyes shone;
Spake Love: "You will be sad alone."
I bade him seek out one more fair,
I laughed and said: "I do not care!"

So Love flew off; I saw him pass
The farthest hill, and then, alas!
The sun went down and closed the day,
And I grew weary of my play.
So I lay down in shadow deep,
But all that night I could not sleep.
The flowers were withered in my hair,
And now—ah, me!—I seemed to care!

I rose while yet the dawn was grey,
And put my playthings all away;
I turned where last I saw him stand,
I thought he must be near at hand;
Yet near or far I cannot choose
But search for him I dare not lose.
I seek for him by brook and river,
I follow hard with lips a-quiver.

For I have heard him in the rain,
Have known his shadow on the plain,
Sometimes I hear him in the dawn
A moment singing,—then 'tis gone:
I hear him calling in the night,
Have heard his laughter on the height . . .
But when I come he is not there.
He mocks me now: "I do not care!"

Yet who can say but it may be
That some day he will wait for me,
Or I, some day when spring is fair,
Shall come upon him unaware.
Ah, surely he must guess my pain,
Nor flying, make me sad again!
Perchance he'll wake with laughing start,
To leap with joy against my heart!

GIRL'S SONG

In the twilight shadows I have heard a far calling,
A singing and a calling as of wild birds' flight;
And all the while the heart of me is like a stream-
let falling

Down dim aisles of beauty, through the darkness
of the night.

O thrilling voice that sings to me! O wild voice
a-ringing!

What are the words you whisper as I stand beside
my door?

"Youth is very quick to pass; oh! while youth's
singing,

Seize his hand and go with him, for he returns
no more!"

My mother bids me cease my dreams and turn to
my spinning.

My sister bids me mind the flying wheel;

But oh! the mad, wild heart of me that's all the
time a-winning

Out to search a far land for a joy I may not feel!

Swaying trees beyond the green, moon white and
slender,

Will you send my dreams to me that I may be at
rest?

An eager lad with laughing eyes and hands strong
and tender,

And little, merry, gay gossoons to hold against my
breast.

Then I think the voice would cease that calls to
me sobbing,

My heart would not be wilful then nor seek abroad
to roam;

I should never heed them, the wild notes throbbing,
For I should know the deep peace, the white peace
of home!

THE SEA IS AWAKE . . .

The sea is awake to-night,
Ever its waves are in motion.
Hark to the sound of the sea!
To the sorrowful cry of the ocean!

Shall you not sometimes lean
From the starry portals of heaven,
To list to the sound of the sea
And the wind that rises at even?

Hearing above its roar,
My heart's cry, lonely and sorrowful,
Beating above the waves
Like the strong grey wings of the sea gull?

Grey are the wind-whipt ridges,
Grey the illimitable spaces.
Hark to the sound of the sea!
Hark to the wind as it races!

Sad is its song in my heart,
Crying, crying, it lingers,
Like a lost soul caught in the net
Of the grey-green ocean's fingers.

Visions it brings of our lost hours,
Sadly it speaks in my slumbers;
*Is it only the wind that I hear
Crying above the combers?*

I seek for a sound that is fading;
Was it only the voice of the curlew?
Hark to the moan of the sea!
And the wailing cry of the sea-mew!

Lost! . . . it is lost in the night wind!
The sound of your sad voice calling;
Lost in the roar of the breakers
That tremble a moment in falling.

Baffled the sea withdraws them,
Holds them a space in suspense,
Flings them again on the shoreline,
Wailingly sinks into silence.

Still by the northern shore
Stretches the grey waste infinite,
Still do the sea gulls wheel,
Crying like ghosts in the twilight.

TIME, THE HEALER

I read your worn old letters, lad; the autumn
winds were blowing
All day to call me from my task, but still I turned
the leaves.
I tried to feel the old pain that once I was
knowing,
But you had lost the power to hurt or I the heart
that grieves.

Once your words brought stinging tears and
strange, dull aching,
Keen to touch my heart with pain their laughing,
idle flow;
That you could talk of light things and my heart
breaking
Seemed to me a cruel pass, for all I loved you so!

Were you wise who never knew all my heart was
crying?
Never guessed, or never told what your keen eyes
saw?
You and I have gone our ways and found peace
undying,
Content and power and loving hands to smooth
our paths before.

If I am sad 'tis not for them, the old griefs
begotten
Of careless words that now are vain to win a sigh
from me;
So long ago the tears fell now all but forgotten,
So long ago the pain went that set my singing
free!

My heart is very quiet now with no dreams
haunting,
Now it seems a little thing if you were false or
true!
It's not you I'd call back, it's not you I'm wanting,
But oh! the little laughing girl who broke her
heart for you!

SONG OF KING ARTHUR'S COURT

Over the sea in Britain's lands
The great white city of Camelot stands;
Gold it is cheap as the golden sands
In Camelot overseas.

In 'broidered vest and a silken gown,
Gold on her head, a golden crown,
A Queen goes riding up and down
In Camelot overseas.

Her Lord he is great, and ever found
At tourney and joust when the bugles sound;
He rides with his Knights of the Table Round
In Camelot overseas.

Strong are those knights and gay I ween,
As they ride 'neath the arches of summer green;
But none so happy as King and Queen
In Camelot overseas!

There is a Queen who has stooped and kist
A Knight with grave eyes of amethyst.
(Foul tongues will tell of her deed, I wist!
In Camelot overseas.)

Though Guenevere's lips are sweeter far
Than all the rivers of waters are,
Fairer than sun and moon and star,
In Camelot overseas.

Yet the good Knight's face is a smitten flame,
He has wronged his King to his bitter shame,
And men will give him a traitor's name
In Camelot overseas!

Lord Arthur is strong and his blood is hot
And he is nobly dight, God wot!
But no such Knight as Launcelot
In Camelot overseas!

Ah, age will wear its high walls down,
The castled turrets of Camelot town,
And who mind then of its great renown?
Fair Camelot overseas.

When walls are dust, and lands made drear,
Still the dewy kiss of Guenevere
Shall call to lovers year on year,
From Camelot overseas!

And men will ache for the great lost bliss
Of the fairest of Queens' remembered kiss,
As many shall die for the dream of this
In Camelot overseas!

King, Knight, and Queen still play their part
Of shattered vows and a broken heart,
As ever of old in the golden mart
Of Camelot overseas.

LOST ECSTASY

The days of joyous madness have gone by,
The ecstasy of spring is on the wane,
All things grow over-ripe and bloom in vain.

There is a hardness in the azure sky
Metallic grown; and scornful as a priest
Muttering the intercessions at a feast

The voices of the insects from the grass
Beat on the ear insistent. Even so
The pulses of our hearts beat slow and slow . . .

Too keen an ecstasy as ours must pass,
And love go too down unfrequented ways.
Ah, time will bring an end to all our days!

In fever heat the ruined garden lies,
The rooks rise heavily on weighted wings;
Far off a locust, drowsing, wakes and sings.

Slowly the rapture fades from your unseeing eyes.
Nay, if we told how love is grown querulous
Would there be any still to pity us?

THE WEST WIND

All day in the little village street
I hear the west wind call:
"Come out to us, come out to us!"
It will not stop at all.

I hear it all the summer day,
It whispers through the night;
The branches croon the song to me
Until the morning light.

All day it cries along the street,
At night the whispers come . . .
O crying voice, be still, be still!
O singing voice, be dumb!

Why will you call when I must stay?
Why will you whisper low?
O restless voice, what have I done
That you should haunt me so?

I hear the wild crows flying north,
But I turn to the west;
Will you not stop till you have drawn
The heart out of my breast?

Oh! I must follow, follow
The lure of your summons sweet;
Though some day I may sorrow
For the little village street!

IN SPRINGTIME

Come and kiss me now, lad,
I would not say you nay!
The Spring has come again, lad,
And all the world is gay!

Now the tangled woodbine climbs
Above the village mill;
The cowslips in the meadow blow,
There's green grass on the hill.

The oriole above, lad,
Is like to split his throat,
The robin in the fields, lad,
Thrills high his merry note.

I was fickle in the autumn,
And I bade you go away;
If you'd come and kiss me now, lad,
I would not say you nay!

LULLABY

Sleep, little baby, sleep and rest,
The moon hangs low in the crimson west;
As the Christ-child slept at Mary's breast,
Sleep, little baby, sleep!

Hush, little baby, hush and dream
Of golden boats on a silver stream,
And let my love creep in between.
Hush, little baby, hush!

Rest, little baby, rest and sleep,
Far in the fields are the little white sheep.
Safe in my arms in slumber deep
Rest, little baby, rest!

THE FISHERWIFE'S SONG

Oh! but his lips were sweet, were sweet,
When he stooped to kiss my mouth!
And my heart was the heart in a swallow's breast
When spring calls in the south.

His restless eyes they pierced my soul,
That day was love begotten,
By wind and wave and wild grey sea,
While time slipped by forgotten.

Into my naked soul he looked,
His eyes were dark with love.
O eager lips! O heart of spring!
O golden skies above!

In the soft dusk his cheek was wet,
When we said our last good-by,
Under the lowering, sullen gleam
Of the cloud-wrack in the sky!

All day the long waves beat the shore,
All night the curlews cry!
To empty tasks I bend my back,
And the years creep slowly by.

By coral reefs full deep he lies,
Where the twisted sea wreaths strain.
*Mother of God, shall I ever come
Back to his arms again?*

SECOND LOVE

As I bend to kiss her lips, dear she is and sweet,
From the red rose in her hair to her dainty feet.
But the roses tinge her cheeks, and she cannot
know

That my kiss is meant for one, pale beneath the
snow . . .

Ah, her lips they meet my own with a frightened
gasp;

There was one who revelled in the rapture of my
clasp.

Oh! the passion of my clasp!

Her sweet hazel eyes are clear and they hold no
guile,

Yet the eyes I seem to see, wear a fond sad smile,
And their shade is deepest blue as the sky at
morn,

Shining under fairest locks, yellow as the corn . . .

Ah, her hair is raven dark, yet my fancy sees
Flaxen hair with glints of gold ruffled in the
breeze,

The gentle little breeze.

She does not dream of one long dead, she does
not even guess

All that I have suffered, all I might confess . . .

Her stainless soul is very pure, her loving heart is
true,

And like a little open book I read her through and
through.

Her thoughts are clear as crystal streams to
drown the long ago.

Since I would not break her heart, she shall never
know.

Ah, she must not know!

A GROUP OF ROUNDELS

I

IN THORLEY'S WOOD

In Thorley's Wood the trees are brown,
The little leaves in vagrant mood
Go scurrying over cliff and down
In Thorley's Wood.

Where once we walked strange spirits brood,
Gone is the splendor, gone the crown;
Never we stand as once we stood

Hearing the murmurs of the town,
Heartwhole and glad we found life good;
Now we see only autumn's frown
In Thorley's Wood.

II

For a little while, for a few short hours
Love gave us the gift of his wonderful smile,
Laughed with us, played with us 'mongst the
flowers
For a little while.

For this shall we wander mile on mile
Sadly beneath a sky that lowers
Because Love fled with the sun from the dial.

All hopeless among our ruined bowers,
Shall we rail at Love's perfidious guile?
Nay, rather rejoice that Love was ours
For a little while.

III

Love, if you knew how all my sleep is shaken
With tears that tremble at the thought of you,
How I with pangs of love am overtaken,
Love, if you knew!

So strong is pride in me I cannot sue
That from your hand I yet had gladly taken,
O careless one, who will not prove me true!

Now youth and joy have my poor heart forsaken,
And I am filled with heaviness anew;
Would not some pity in your heart awaken
Love, if you knew?

VILLANELLE

Poets of the long ago
Sang a song of lovers' vows,
Sang to all the winds that blow.

They are gone, their heads lie low,
From age-long sleep we cannot rouse
Poets of the long ago.

Only dream how all aglow,
Sappho, 'neath the Lesbian boughs,
Sang to all the winds that blow;

Learn from Ovid's sweetest flow
As with praise he still endows
Poets of the long ago,

How rapt Orpheus, loving so,
Sang his bride from Pluto's house,
Sang to all the winds that blow.

Would to charm thee I could know
One sweet song which time allows
Poets of the long ago
Sang to all the winds that blow.

A SOLDIER OF NO BATTLES

You never saw the foemen's trench
A curved grey streak along the hills,
You never knew the battle joy,
But only endless, hated drills.

With gun and book you went to school,
And studied hard to find the way,
As uncomplaining, smiling still,
You bore the burden of each day.

Daily you cheered the weary march,
You laughed at wind and cold and wet,
Or charged with tired, stumbling feet
Over a mimic parapet.

You never left your homeland shores,
You stayed behind when they had gone;
Yet still along the Flanders front
Your dauntless spirit "carries on!"

You might not bear to God's good house
The grim stigmata of the strife,
No wounds are yours in battle won
To show men how you gave your life.

May you sleep sound who played so well
The losing game; who unafraid
Gave your fair life and youth away,
And dying, won Christ's accolade!

AUTUMN AGAIN!

Autumn again, and the green leaves turning!
Across October fields one wine-red day
We walked together. I can hear you say
"The maples go the first, their leaves are burn-
ing!"

Autumn again! and the old years calling,
In every tingling breath of wood-smoke blown,
In misty nights and mellow sunlight shown,
And in the woods the slow leaves gently falling.

But you, alas! they tell me you are gone,
Like any dead leaf fluttering in the wood.
Like them you burned your joyous youth away,
Splendid and brief, for glad adventure born!
Amidst the gold I see them where they sway,
Red leaves that burn like drops of crimson blood!

TO AN OLD FRIEND

Dear friend, the years full many a leash have
 slipped
And led us wandering over hill and down,
Since we were comrades where the shadows
 dipped,
Walking the pathways of the little town.
How many a mad, glad, sunny, summer day
We climbed the breezy heights of Golden Hill,
Finding to youth's far fairy-land the way
Whence comes the echo of our laughter still.
Oh, we have found the world a wide, strange
 place,
And we have sat with sorrow for a guest!
Fair paths we dreamed, alas! we could not trace;
Yet still the old dreams are the loveliest.
With them within my heart I keep for you
A place, dear comrade, gentle, kind, and true.

MUSIC

Deep in the sensuous harmony of sound
I sink as sinks some swimmer when he braves
The swirling floods and feels the powerful waves
Close o'er his head. In rapture I am drowned,
And overpowered with voluptuous death.
In vain I seek to stem the whirling tide,
Its sweetness sickens me, my arms stretch wide,
I struggle in a mad desire for breath.
The wild notes pause, my soul is lifted up.
I drink all joy as from a golden cup;
Fair fame and youth within my hand I hold,
My heart is filled with daring, I am bold.
Then through the notes humanity's grave cry:
"Ah, heart, that we should live thus, but to die!"

LASSITUDE

Like as a harlot, wakening in the dawn,
Sees by her side an old man worn and grey
Where yesternight a youth of spirit lay,
So looks the world to me, so old and drawn.
Alas! now long forgotten loves come back
To knock with restless fingers at my heart;
Hopes counted dead, and dreams that have no
part
In this sad present . . . Ah! the bitter lack,
The empty pomp and glitter of old dreams!
These weary me, till I am wearied both
Of joy and grief. How should I know again
The voice of youth which my own hand has slain,
Or love that but a hollow mockery seems;
Now death might come and find me nothing loath!

REMEMBRANCE

Dear, sometimes when the Spring is newly come,
And sunlight like a luminous veil is falling,
Down the long vista of the years recalling
Old hopes and dreams and tears; then from
My heart, the while my lips are dumb,
I yield you, dear, the tribute that is due
To our old love and all my pride in you.
Or when the bees in flaming autumn hum,
Lost in the purple aster's heart of gold,
Ah, friend that loved me once so long before,
Do you feel as the red sun sinks from sight
Strange longing for a dream we lost of old?
Oh, had we only cared a little more,
Who have not even yet forgotten quite!

WHEN YOU WERE HERE

When you were here the trees were bare,
The leaden skies gleamed murky grey,
On sodden fields all brown and cold
The snow in dirty patches lay.
No presage there of spring's vast birth,
That dreary March, and yet it seemed
That heaven had stooped and kissed the earth,
When you were here!

Now you are gone the robins nest,
Green-sleeved with spring stands every tree,
Across the fields the blue bird skims,
Between their banks the creeks run free.
O little bird that sings aloft!
O wild geese flying high!
The wealth of all the spring I'd give
For March's leaden sky!

AN APRIL LOVE SONG

'Twas on an April morning
When all the world was fair,
'Twas on an April morning,
(I had blossoms in my hair)
The birds were nesting in the trees,
The lambs were all at play,
You came across the fields to me
Upon an April day.

All the world was making love,
(You and I together)
Your lips to mine as hand in hand
We strolled amongst the heather.
Ah, long has been the roaming,
And rough has been the way,
Yet still my heart is singing
Of that sweet April day!

THE SPRING IS HERE . . .

The spring is here,
And the singing bird,
But my heart is dead,
It lies unstirred.

Why do you seek,
O wind from the south,
To rouse my heart
With your singing mouth?

My heart is dead,
It will never awake!
I buried it deep
For my lover's sake.

It lies in its grave,
Where the shadows meet,
With a stone at its head,
And a stone at its feet.

Sweet spring, I pray you,
Sing not so loud,
Lest my heart should wake
In its heavy shroud!

SECRET

Love came to me with laughter,
Love went from me with tears,
He took my Springtime with him,
And left me bitter years.

Yet none may guess my secret;
I have hidden my dreams away,
And never a word shall there be said
From now to the Judgment Day.

Now am I through with sorrow,
I am freed from my restless fears;
*But oh, the pitiless empty days,
And the terrible peace of years!*

THE PASSING

Ah, little first love with the wistful eyes,
Why do you come as the twilight dies?
Why to-night when the moon hangs low
Do I feel your lips as once long ago?
Why should a memory haunt me so?
Is it a whisper that sighs on the breeze?
Is it the glint of the moon through the trees?
Yet why to-night must the days that are gone,
Come back like the shadow before the dawn?
To-night when my joy is full!

O little first love with the wind-tossed hair,
What do you see? . . . You are standing there
Like one who gazes far out to sea.
Is it the future that's waiting for me?
Or only the dream of what could not be?
Is it the sight of the moon as it dies,
That fades the light from your wistful eyes?
Do you turn so sadly because you know
That another must nearer and dearer grow? . . .
O little first love, good-by!

A MEMORY

A fringe of trees along the curving shore,
Where ripples break beneath the ruddy banks;
A bay of azure set with gleams of white;
A little crooked street down to the sea
With donkeys toiling up the steepy steps;
Two white sails motionless, far out at sea;
The clanking of an anchor on the wharf;
The low, sweet, sucking murmur of the tide;
A sailor's child who walks along the beach
And turns the nets, spreading them out to dry;
This is the picture I can see to-day,
Closing my eyes and dreaming you with me . . .
Yet it was over long ago, dear heart,
For you and me, how long, how long ago!

IF WE HAD KNOWN

What thing now remains, what is there left to
say?

We have come to the end of time, we have known
all things;

Now in our weary hearts a haunting memory
clings

Of old and remembered delights outliving their
day!

To love but a little while and then to forget,

Surely that is better than wasting grief,

Better a light love that fades with the falling leaf,

Than pain that gnaws at a heart remembering
yet!

Ah, had we guessed of to-day, had we known of
this,

Ere that first spring, ere the bitter seed were sown,

We had turned quickly away while love was a
thing unknown,

We had never leaned together to seal love with a
kiss!

ECHOES

What is it calling
that will not cease?
O wide blue sea!
O wind in the meadow grass!

I remember now;
long, long ago you called me
out of eternity's fastness,
a voice of ineffable longing . . .
Sorrows of countless ages
dwell in my heart and remember;
memories of myriad millions
speak to me out of the shadows.
How shall I answer their calling,
wild voice in my bosom?

I remember it all at last,
a sorrow eager and restless
as the longing that beats in Spring
in the heart of a swallow.
It has neither time nor place,
yet it calls to me over and over . . .
Once in a long lost land,
Was there a place where we heard it?
In the dawn of a world comprehended,
ere we struggled and leapt into being?

I cannot fathom the answer;
only there sound in my ears
the voices of children singing
over the grave of the years;
here by the wide blue sea,
where the wind is stirring the meadow grass!

VALE

Βάσκανος ἔσθ' Ἀΐδα

—ERINNA

We looked for life and lo! they gave us death.
We dreamed of laughter and they brought us
tears.

Crushing the joyous heritage of our years
An angel came with bitter blasting breath,
Came quickly, like a sudden summer storm
That strikes with rushing thunder from the south,
And nevermore the sweet name on my mouth,
And nevermore I see your well loved form.
Too soon, too soon, death bowed your lovely head,
And bitter was the cup he bade me drink!
Down through the years a haunting memory slips
Of old delights that to oblivion sink,
Glad days we knew and happy words you said,
Ere death had laid his finger on your lips.

As mothers lay with tender care away
The toys that little dead hands have caressed,
So I keep locked forever in my breast
Dear memories of our long vanished day,
Now that no more you tread the glad green earth,
Nor watch the year draw to its amber close.
Where have they hidden you? Oh, where have
those

Sweet voices lured you? To what newer birth?
Some fairer country are you wandering now,
With quiet eyes and peace upon your brow?
Yet I shall never watch a swallow's flight,
Nor ever hear a sudden song of bird,
But all my heart with restless pity stirred,
Will know regret, remembering your delight!

For you were comrade that the west wind knew,
Yours was the rapture of the wide-flung dawn,
The joy of life, the ecstasy of morn;
I think death was not meant for such as you!
To-day my lips will falter on your name,
To-day you slumber far from sun and rain,
The laughing spring will call to you in vain:
"O singing heart! O little heart of flame!"
And you will heed not though the daisies run
Over your grave, spreading gay blooms above,
You sleep unmindful even of my love,
O glad-heart worshipper of wind and sun!
What dreams, what visions, what fair beckoning
 hands,
What passionate thirst lured you to other lands?

Sometimes I wonder, now the years have flown
Since you went from us to the empty void,
The bitter night when you fared forth alone,
And all our dreams were at a breath destroyed,
A glad adventurer, did your soul wing
Straight to the crimson sunset's heart of flame?
Or did it linger still, a wistful thing,
Longing to hear the whisper of your name?
Are you so far? I sometimes think that yet
You shall come back one day when spring is fair
To our loved English lanes to greet me there,
Where we shall know no more of love's regret;
Or you and I shall walk beside the sea,
Beneath the turquoise skies of Italy!

Within a shop where piled up counters bore
The delicate dainty things you often bought,
I saw the little toy which you had sought
And found not when you searched for it before.
"Ah, here it is at last!" I, smiling, cried,
Nor guessed how such as this could break my
 heart.
The gay lights paled, stilled was the busy mart,

For suddenly I remembered you had died!
All down the aisles the careless people passed,
I saw the counter through a misty haze,
And then the shop-girl's sudden look of doubt;
"You will not take it, then?" she asked at last.
I shook my head, and sadly I went out
Still followed by her silent, wondering gaze.

I sat alone, and nursing my despair,
I turned the pages of an ancient book,
And from its words, at random, these I took,
(Ah, sadly some old poet wrote them there,
Long, long ago, beside the Egyptian sea!)
"O Charidas, what waits before us men?"
"Great darkness!" "And the resurrection then?"
"A lie indeed! We perish utterly!"
Can it be true? But no! I'll think more fair
In the wide fields of Heaven blooms the rose,
And all the flowers of God smile for your sake!
No little heart-sick cry of mine that goes
Along the wind, I pray can reach you there,
Lest, pitying me, your gentle heart should break!

If only I might sleep and never dream,
Alas! for in my restless dreams I know
Only that you are gone from me. I go
Groping and helpless for a little gleam
To light the road that I must tread alone!
How often I have waked and sobbing cried:
"It is a lie! a lie! she has not died!"
But when the red dawn in my window shone
I knew the bitter truth; the healing lie
Choked in my throat. O Death! how could you
seize
The little heart I loved, bereft of flame,
The empty hands, and lips colder than these
That murmur broken promises till I
Awake, my lips still sobbing on her name!

With heavy clouds the sky is overlaid,
The mournful rain drips slowly from the trees,
The bare boughs shake and rattle in the breeze,
In the dark grave, dear, are you not afraid?
How can you face the silence undismayed?
You who were full of little laughing fears,
To lie there all alone through lonely years!
You were for singing and for gladness made.
Oh, we are grave who have had speech with
 sorrow,
But she sweet pagan to the heart thereof!
Be kind to her who knew no glad to-morrow,
O Earth! lie softly her closed eyes above,
The little quiet hands now turned to dust,
And eager loving heart that stayed Death's lust!

Sometimes I say: "I have lived long, and know
That living is but laughter come to grief,
That joy is tremulous, and rapture brief
And goes the way that all dead day-dreams go!"
For there is still a crying at my door,
And there is still a sobbing voice that rings
With dull insistence down forgotten springs,
Of all that might have been, and now no more
Can ever be! O frail beginnings lost!
In my soul's soul I count the bitter cost,
As bitter as the lees of wasted wine!
What thing more piteous than the joys we
 missed?
Not the bright lips of Beatrice unkissed,
Nor the grave eyes of that sad Florentine!

There is a picture set within the space
Of my heart's heart, and none may enter there
Save she for whose sake I have kept it fair,
And looked with calmness on Death's august face.
He who has known sorrow's bitterest fret,
He faces dumbly unavailing years

That torture with their old remembered fears,
And turns him ever to the old regret.
Alas! before your going I had known
Full many a passing joy for my delight,
Blind had I followed many a lesser light,
While your love like a splendid beacon shone!
But now I walk with memory alone,
And none to ease the darkness of my night!

I see your eyes in every passing face,
I hear your voice among a world of cries,
The earth is full of your remembered grace,
Ere silence came and closed your wondering eyes.
Once I had thought to turn me from your shrine,
And put out all the candles I had lit,
To sit in darkness where no sun would shine,
Knowing that none would come to lighten it.
I said: "I will not live now she is dead,
For all my life is in the grave with her!"
Then I remembered little words you said
And things you loved, and knew I loved them too,
So life came back, a wistful, eager ghost,
And gave the lie unto my braggart boast!

To voice the grief my heart alone could speak
I made for you a wreath of idle words,
That sang within my heart like homing birds,
But impotent they were, and all too weak!
I said: "The world indeed will scorn my gift,
And some, perhaps, condemn me in this wise,
'Why shows she sorrow in such beggar's guise
Who knew such wealth of love?'" Oh, see, I lift
Frail hands that may not ever find you there;
Seeking a voice with weary ears I go,
For you alone who would have found them fair,
Are far from any songs that I can make,
Though I had sung, my dearest, for your sake
As Sappho sang in Lesbos long ago!

Beloved, in these brooding, mellow days
The hours slip slowly, they are filled
With the red wine the careless autumn spilled
Over the world. Wrapped in resplendent haze
The regal sun sinks smouldering down the west;
The slow leaves falling in the misty wood,
The far off line of rooks, a darkening flood,
Are messengers of you I loved the best!
Something of your presence seems to creep
Into the rustling woods about me here,
Something of your laughter makes more dear
The shadowy paths, and I no longer weep.
You come to me at sunset and at dawn,
Forever here and yet forever gone!

My heart said: "Go where all the winds are
 keeping
Their place of old, and sing of Death as one
Who brings fair dreams of radiant fancy spun
To tired hearts and eyes now done with weeping."
For her sake whose glad singing time is over,
I shall put from me all sweet joys untried,
The fair hopes faded and the dreams that died,
The sweet strong comradeship of love and lover.
Though lips are mute I still shall hold you dear,
O Unforgotten! shall my song take wing
Nor beat unheeded 'gainst the gates of Heaven?
Nay, come to you in some glad dream of spring.
So I shall sing undaunted, hoping even
That somehow, somewhere, you perhaps can
 hear!

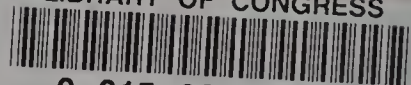
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